

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of handing off a mobile station from an internal cellular communications network to an external mobile cellular communications network, the internal network being a packet switched network having a network controller, wherein the method comprising:

allocating at least one of cell of the internal cellular network as a border cell, the at least one cell being adjacent cells of the external cellular network;

detecting the movement of said mobile station into said border cell;

generating an advance hand-off request in response to detecting said mobile station in the border cell and in accordance with a prediction algorithm which uses a set of predetermined parameters associated with said mobile station [and determines] for determining when an actual hand-off [request is made] is likely to be required; and

[wherein said external network is a mobile communications network and said internal network is a packet switched network and said internal cellular network transmits and receives a plurality of signals using the same communication standard for radio frequency communication as said external cellular network.]

setting up a communication channel in the external network in response to said advance hand-off request for use by said mobile station when an actual hand-off is made.

2. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein said network controller implements the actual hand-off to said communication channel in response to an actual hand-off request.

3. (currently amended) A method according to [any preceding] claim[s] 1, wherein said mobile station is in communication with a base transceiver station in the internal cellular communications network prior to hand-off.

4. A method according to claim 3, wherein said predetermined parameters for use by said prediction algorithm includes timing advance information reported from the base station to the mobile station.

5. (currently amended) A method according to [any preceding] claim 1, wherein the [internal cellular communications network comprises an internal] network controller [which] carries out the prediction and issues said hand-off advance request.

6. (currently amended) A method according to claim 5, wherein said hand-off advance request is issued in packet format via a packet communication path from the [internal] network controller to [said] a network controller of said external network.

7. (currently amended) A network controller for use in an internal cellular communications network, said internal network is a packet switched network and comprises a plurality of cells and including at least one border cell, said at least one border cell being

adjacent cells of an external mobile cellular communications network having an external network controller, the internal network controller comprising:

means for detecting the movement of said mobile station into said border cell;

means for selectively issuing a hand-off advance request in response to detecting said mobile station in the border cell and advising said network controller of said external network that a hand-off is likely to be required in accordance with a predetermined algorithm which uses a set of predetermined parameters associated with said mobile station; and

means for setting up a communication channel ~~in~~ with the external communications network for use by said mobile station when an actual hand-off request is made[.]

[said internal cellular network transmits and receives a plurality of signals using the same communication standard for radio frequency communication as said external cellular network].

8. An internal cellular network controller according to claim 7, comprising a base transceiver operable to set up an RF communication channel with said mobile station.

9. (currently amended) A network controller according to claim 7 [or 8], wherein said external network controller is in communication with said internal network controller by a packet communication path for transmission of said hand-off advance request.

10. (previously presented) A method according to claim 2, wherein said mobile station is in communication with a base transceiver station in the internal cellular communications network prior to hand-off.

11. (previously presented) A method according to claim 2, wherein the internal cellular communications network comprises an internal network controller which carries out the prediction and issues said hand-off advance request.

12. (previously presented) A method according to claim 3, wherein the internal cellular communications network comprises an internal network controller which carries out the prediction and issues said hand-off advance request.

13. (previously presented) A method according to claim 4, wherein the internal cellular communications network comprises an internal network controller which carries out the prediction and issues said hand-off advance request.

14. (previously presented) A network controller according to claim 8, wherein said external network controller is in communication with said internal network controller by a packet communication path for transmission of said hand-off advance request.

15. (new) An internal cellular communications network, said internal network is a packet switched network and comprises a plurality of cells and including at least one border cell, said at least one border cell being adjacent cells of an external mobile cellular

communications network having an external network controller, the internal cellular communication network comprising:

means for detecting the movement of said mobile station into said border cell;

means for selectively issuing a hand-off advance request in response to detecting said mobile station in the border cell and advising said network controller of said external network that a hand-off is likely to be required in accordance with a predetermined algorithm which uses a set of predetermined parameters associated with said mobile station; and

means for setting up a communication channel in the external communications network for use by said mobile station when an actual hand-off request is made.